

BALLET

TODAY

1^D/₃



APRIL, 1956

MARGOT FONTEYN

Ballet Today

APRIL 1956

No. 4

VOL. 9

CONTENTS

	Page
Ballet Guide	2
Backstage	3
London Reviews	4
France	5
Monte Carlo	6
Switzerland	7
Canada	7
America	8
How a Ballet is born	10
La Péri	11
Musician at the Ballet	15
New Records	16
Flamenco Dancing	17
Books	19
Labanotation	20
Young Dancers	23

Editor—Estelle Herf

All Editorial, Advertising and other communications to :—

15, Upper Brighton Road,
Surbiton, Surrey,
(Elmbridge 9743).

BALLET TODAY is published
monthly at 1s. 3d.
Subscription Rate inland 15s.
Overseas 17s. 6d.
All remittances from abroad must
be made payable in England.

Cover Portrait
MARGOT FONTEYN
in
La Péri

Exclusive Ballet Today
photograph by Mike Davis

All unsigned material in BAL-
LET TODAY is by the Editor.
Opinions expressed by other writ-
ers may not necessarily be those
of the Editor. All material is
Copyright and may not be re-
produced without the Publisher's
permission.

FULL BALLET GUIDE FOR THE MONTH

Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden

MARCH

23rd (Fri.)
Les Sylphides
Madame Chrysanthème
Noctambules
24th (Sat. mat.)
Cinderella (Linden, Blair, Ashton,
Park)
24th (Sat. Eve.)
Cinderella (Fonteyn, Somes, Ash-
ton, Park)
26th (Mon.)
Le Lac Des Cygnes (Elvin, Blair,
Grahame, Park)
27th (Tues.)
Les Sylphides
The Firebird
Job (Revival 1st perf.)
28th (Wed.)
Les Patineurs
The Firebird
Job
29th (Thurs.)
Madame Chrysanthème
Scenes de Ballet
The Firebird
30th (Good Friday)
Theatre closed
31st (Sat. mat.)
The Sleeping Beauty (Nerina,
Linden, Powell, Park)
31st (Sat. eve.)
The Sleeping Beauty (Grey, Chat-
field, Beriosova)

APRIL

2nd (Mon.)
The Sleeping Beauty (Fonteyn,
Somes, Grey)
3rd (Tues.)
The Sleeping Beauty (Beriosova,
Somes, Drage)

4th (Wed.)
Mam'zelle Angot
Symphonic Variations (Revival
1st perf.)
Job
5th (Thurs.)
Mam'zelle Angot
Symphonic Variations
Job
6th (Fri.)
Cinderella (Linden, Blair, Ashton,
Park)
7th (Sat. mat.)
Les Patineurs
Giselle (Revival 1st perf.)
7th (Sat. eve.)
Les Patineurs
Giselle
9th (Mon.)
Scenes de Ballet
La Péri
Mam'zelle Angot
10th (Tues.)
Noctambules
La Péri
Mam'zelle Angot
11th (Wed.)
Giselle
The Three Cornered Hat
12th (Thurs.)
Giselle
The Three Cornered Hat
13th (Fri.)
Coppelia (Linden, Blair, Edwards)
14th (Sat. mat.)
Le Lac des Cygnes (Nerina,
Lindsay, Linden, Doyle)
14th (Sat. eve.)
Le Lac Des Cygnes (Beriosova,
Chatfield, Page, Lane)

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet

Mar.	19th	<i>Alhambra Theatre, Bradford</i>
"	26th	<i>Theatre Royal, Nottingham</i>
April	9th	<i>Kings Theatre, Southsea</i>
"	16th	<i>The Pavilion, Bournemouth</i>
"	23rd	<i>Hippodrome, Bristol</i>
"	30th	<i>The Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield</i>

Festival Ballet

Mar.	19th	<i>Her Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen</i>
"	26th	<i>King's Theatre, Glasgow</i> (2 weeks)

From April 17th Festival Ballet will give six performances during the celebrations of the wedding of Miss Grace Kelly to Prince Rainier III

Ballet Rambert

Mar.	30th	<i>Television. Swan Lake, Act II</i>
------	------	--------------------------------------

Royal Festival Hall

Romeo and Juliet *Nine performances only.*
Film-starring Ulanova in the full length ballet

Mon.	Mar.	26th	} Two evening performances at 6 and 8.30
Tues.	"	27th	
Fri.	April	6th	

Easter Mon. April 2nd *Performances at 3 p.m., 6 p.m., 8.30 p.m.*



BACKSTAGE

ANY "Fonteyn night" is a tumultuous affair, and I have attended many, but I have never witnessed such a night as that of the tenth Anniversary of the re-opening of the Royal Opera House after the war, which was celebrated on February 20th with a performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*. There was magic in the air. The audience rose to its feet with a roar at the end of the exquisite performance of Fonteyn and Sones and simply would not let them go. Always completely self-possessed on stage, even Fonteyn seemed bewildered by the continued applause as curtain after curtain fell, and the stage became littered with flowers thrown at her feet from the gallery. Ten years seems an incredibly short time in which to build up a career and establish oneself so firmly in the affections of the British public, for surely there is no other living artist so well beloved as Fonteyn.

THE Ballet Festival in Denmark will be held from May 18th to 30th, and will include two new works by Danish choreographers. A full report by Gerard Bourke will be included in our July issue.

ULANOVA will be seen for the first time in London in a full length ballet when the Russian film of *Romeo and Juliet* is shown at the Royal Festival Hall during March and April (see Diary for details of the nine performances).

BORIS Knisaeff is producing the Purcell masque *The Fairy Queen* in April, in Geneva. The dancers will be members of his school, the singing in English, and some English solo singers will be brought over; there will be no spoken dialogue, as in the version produced at Covent Garden soon after the War.

THE Ballet of the Stanislavskij Theatre has accepted to go to Paris this year. They will bring a company of 100 artists, and give their own intriguing version of *Lac*, by Burmeister.

THE photograph above, taken by Leon Ward, shews all the artists on stage at the finale of the midnight performance held at the Stoll Theatre in January in memory of Anna Pavlova. Those taking part were Elsa-Marianne Von Rosen in *La Lithuanienne*, Marjorie Tallchief partnered by George Skibine in *Night Shadow*. Margot Fonteyn and Michael Sones appeared in the Episodes of "Water" and "Air" in *Homage to the Queen*, with Violetta Elvin as Queen of the Waters and her Consort Bryan Ashbridge. Alicia Markova in *Boleto* 1830. In *Les Sylphides*, Beryl Grey, Rosemary Lindsay, Philip Chatfield, Svetlana Beriosova and the Sadler's Wells Company took part. Other items in the programme were Nadia Nerina and Alexis Rassiné in the pas de deux from *Don Quixote*, Ram Gopal in *Lord Siva's Dance to the Setting Sun* and *The Golden Eagle*, Bjorn Holmgren in a variation from *The Magic Flute*, Toni Lander and John Gilpin in a pas de deux from *The Flower Festival at Genzano*, Yvette Chauvire in *Grand Pas Classique*, and Mariane Orlando and Kenneth Petersen in *Pas de Deux from Romeo and Juliet*, Robert Irving and Leighton Lucas were conducting. A tribute to Anna Pavlova was spoken by Dame Ninette de Valois, and the Envoi by Anton Dolin.

VIOLETTA Elvin danced in Sweden for the first time during February, when she took the title role in *Giselle* at the Royal Theatre of Stockholm. The Swedish Dance Association had arranged a programme in honour of Pavlova. Miss Elvin was partnered by premier danseur Bjorn Holmgren.

PIGEON Crowle's new book *Enter the Ballerina* published just before Christmas, is now reprinting and will be ready this month (March).

PETER Daubeney has just announced his programme for the Palace Theatre during 1956,

and amongst the many outstanding attractions, of interest to dance lovers will be the news that in May Roland Petit with his Ballets de Paris will commence a four weeks season and will present two new ballets, *La Chambre* by Simenon, and *Les Belles Damnées* by Petit. Renée Jeanmaire will dance with Petit in *Carmen*, and *Les Forains* will also figure in the repertoire. In June the Hungarian State Dance Company, which includes a gypsy orchestra and choir in its Company of 130, will make their first appearance in England. In September Antonio will be with us once again. Other distinguished visitors to the Palace Theatre will include Jean-Louis Barrault and his wife, Madeleine Renaud, who will be here for three weeks in December.

"CRANKS" an original musical entertainment, devised written and produced by John Cranko, and reviewed in our February edition, has now been transferred to St. Martin's Theatre.

AUDIENCES who see Maureen Webster dance the role of Little Clara in *Casse Noisette* assume that this diminutive ballet dancer is an infant prodigy. Maureen's youthful appearance has sometimes been a handicap to her career. When appearing in the Siamese ballet in *The King and I* she was often asked for certificates to prove she was twelve! In fact she is eighteen. Maureen joined Festival Ballet for their Monte Carlo season. The Company's appearance at Kilburn recently was her family's first opportunity to see her dance the role of Little Clara. Their verdict—rapt approval—even from her young brother!

LEONIDE Massine is the next guest choreographer of the Royal Theatre, Stockholm, and is to stage three of his works, *Sacre du Printemps*, *Tricorne* and *Gaité Parisienne*.

A ballet society under the name "Freunde des Ballets" has been founded in Munich. 50 people—dancers, critics, designers, balletomanes and students—met in the ballet studio Gudrun Sohn for the purpose of setting up a society which would take steps to spread knowledge and appreciation of the art of ballet. A working programme for 1956 was formulated and the society plans to become a centre for people interested in ballet in Munich who haven't previously had a chance to meet. Young dancers are to be sponsored, publicity of ballet events is to be increased. The activities of the society will be kept in close communication with the ballet troupes for the sake of achieving higher artistic standards.

The following people have been elected chairmen and treasurer:

1. Karl Viktor Prinz zu Wied, Dr. jur.
2. Wilfried Hofmann, junior barrister
3. Erwin v. Bressensdorf, manager.

Among the founders were Mr. and Mrs. Carter, master of ballet at the Munich State Opera, Mr. Sayers of the British Consulate General, Mrs. Annette Chappell, first dancer at the Munich State Opera—to name some of the English speaking audience.

Through efforts of the society it has been possible to distribute among students some 100 free tickets for the final rehearsal of Mr. Carter's newest ballet creation, *Mr. Scrooge*.

Under the sponsorship of the society Mr. Carter gave a lecture on ballet technique with demonstrations to an audience of about 300 students.

SHOWN recently at The Royal Theatre of Stockholm, a short film never before seen in public and which had belonged to Pavlova. It was taken by Dandré as a souvenir of her touring and home life, is now owned by Rolf de Mare and forms part of the collection at the Dance Museum of Stockholm.

To be published in the autumn *My Ten Years with Pavlova* by Algranoff.

SLEEPING BEAUTY

THE 10th anniversary of the postwar re-opening of the Royal Opera House was marked by a performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*—so far as possible, identical in cast with the initial performance of February 20th, 1946. In fact, there were three dancers appearing in the same roles on these two dates ten years apart—Margot Fonteyn, Beryl Grey, Leslie Edwards; less than a dozen soloists still survive from that first performance and the main solid core of the Company now consists of dancers who were at that time either corps-de-ballet members or still in the student stage.

This is inevitable, and possibly this company has as high a reputation as any other top-rank company in the world today, as a place in which dancers stay, and continue to stay, through the changes and vicissitudes of the years. But one regrets the moving on of some notable dancers who were with the company in its early Covent Garden days; dancers who have not yet ceased activity and who now dance elsewhere or work as teachers, producers and *regisseurs*.

Miss Fonteyn provided a red-letter day for all of us who recalled both the 1946 occasion and the first performance of the first production of this ballet, at Sadler's Wells in 1939. She has, at some indefinable point within the past three years, attained that degree of harmonious balance of all the parts of the personality, all the possible nuances of interpretation of the character, all the finesse that the actual technique involved will permit; and this blend of qualities she now projects in each performance of those roles which she feels are incontestably hers. (It is perhaps superfluous to point out that a dancer of her quality and status does not undertake roles which do not fully involve her interest; indeed why should a talent of this size be wasted on characterisations thin enough to be adequately performed by junior ballerinas, even soloist dancers?)

What becomes more and more obvious with this repertoire is the fact that the 19th. century full-length ballets are *not* merely ballerina-vehicles; although a good deal of their choreography suggests that the Old Masters who created them took their contemporary ballerinas very seriously—(understandable when the records show that said ballerinas would not hesitate to intrigue against any choreographer who failed to create big,

dance parts for them in his more important new works). In spite of the deficiencies—and they are deficiencies despite what the fashionable apologists for Ballet pretend—of long, shapeless ensembles, of insipid solos, of mime-action of a staggering, moronic level: nevertheless these ballets, such as *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Coppelia*, *Giselle*, contain enough lively dance moments, little passages of mime, phases of manoeuvring of varying sized choral groups, to be worth all our attention. The ballerina's own performance is heightened and intensified by the general high quality attained by the rest of the cast.

The paradox of ballet in performance is that second-rate work all round does not provide a flattering framework for the ballerina-role; in a lazy performance the ballerina's effort looks unduly strained, the technique shows through the "skin" of the part. Whereas if the whole cast works to create clean, strong dancing and miming, it develops an atmosphere of full commitment to the story which sustains and encourages the ballerina—even without her conscious awareness of what is happening—to give splendidly and completely everything she can live and feel and imagine into the central role.

The test, on both the company and the other top-rank dancers, of giving five further performances on this work in succession proved too much for everybody. Against all one's human (and critical) inclinations, one was compelled to judge the other exponents of the Aurora role by contrasting them against Fonteyn's performance. This is an inevitability with a company making a big policy point of keeping these ancient works in active repertoire, to this considerable extent. Violetta Elvin and Beryl Grey make highly individual, and legitimate, interpretations of Aurora, but with them there goes a stronger stress on different parts of each act, of each big scene, of each dance, and Fonteyn's superb ability is to extract the last milligramme of expressiveness out of both her acting and her dancing in every second of every phase of the ballet.

Svetlana Beriosova has a complete mastery of Aurora emotionally and her patent sincerity and richness of expressive power do much to cover up (not wholly hide) the weaknesses of much of her dance technique. With both Fonteyn and Beriosova, Michael Somes gave a noble, easy and relaxed performance as Florimund and danced his solos with a grace and vigour

that were heartening to watch.

Two new ballets followed each other so fast that one wondered if some startling new policy of interest in creative—rather than reconstructive—work had evolved at the directorial end of the company.

LA PÉRI

Ashton harked back to his early days with the Ballet Rambert and on February 15th made a fresh version of his 25-years-ago *La Péri*; a legend of a Persian poet-philosopher who saw the flower of immortality in the grasp of a sleeping *péri*, and of his fate when he tried to win it from her for the wrong reasons. This worked out as an intense, wonderfully danced *pas-de-deux* for Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes, in which Ashton showed them, as it were, wrestling spiritually, as well as physically, over the right to possession of the flower. Its choreography used conventional as well as novel movements, there were strongly worked and lovely slow-motion turns and writhings and weavings of the two bodies around one another. Some of these were idealisations of the motions of the act of love, but relieved of all obviousness or insistence or repetition. For 22 minutes we saw a nearly perfect continuous pattern of some of the amazingly beautiful things that the human body can do in controlled motion—but, so far as story was concerned, to little avail. In the end it had not been made clear why Iskender struggled in passion and despair with the *péri*, and the whole effect would have been more intense if no attempt had been made to tell a story; for this was a story that cannot be told in ballet movement.

NOCTAMBULES

On March 1st, Kenneth Macmillan underwent his baptism as an entrant for the Top Rank Choreographer Class, with his first Covent Garden ballet, *Noctambules*. To say that it was an honourable failure is to under-estimate all the novelties of his choreographic structure, and to disregard the wonderful help the work received by being danced by so many matured and considerate dancers. Its story, of a Hypnotist whose performance fails and who, out of spite, then hypnotises his audience into doing many queer and revealing things, belongs to the romantic era of a century ago. There's no harm in using old ideas but the danger is that the old idea may—even if well expressed—fail to make the maximum emotional impact on its audience. In general, it can be truly said, that English Ballet has suffered

more artistic failures from the idiocy or the banality of its plot-ideas than from the quality of choreography or decor or music applied to their expression.

And unhappily, almost identical ideas have been used in the past decade for half-a-dozen ballets seen here—almost everything of situation, of characterisation, of *corps-de-ballet* manoeuvres and acting, that were shown in *Noctambules* have occurred in ballets by Roland Petit, Andrée Howard, John Cranko. This is *not* saying that Macmillan has directly imitated these people; he has drawn his plot and the kind of atmosphere needed to make it work out of that common stock of situations which has already been overworked for balletic purposes.

And yet, despite my disappointment—for I consider Macmillan the first true original among native choreographers since Tudor's amazing rise to fame—I found much to admire and wonder at, even while I felt frustrated and exasperated by so much of the sheer, honest-to-God ugliness and violence of the *corps-de-ballet* patterns, of the insipid allegedly characterising dances given to, for example, Nadia Nerina as the Faded Beauty, to Anya Linden as the Poor Girl, to Brian Shaw as The Soldier. Even that splendidly reliable mime, Leslie Edwards, could make little of the Hypnotist while made up in heavy green and black, with a stylised (stylised out of what original??) wig, and a too voluminous costume.

Humphrey Searle provided a score both sonorous and exciting—but it was the excitement of too much effect-for-effect's-sake; despite his solid workmanship (and notwithstanding his barely concealed awareness of such as Stravinsky, Satie, Berg) it is a score insisting too much on its own rights. Mr. Searle has apparently yet to learn that Music in ballet is the handmaid—if necessary a very humble and resigned handmaid—of the choreography, and not the co-partner. The same lesson is also due to be taught to Mr. Nicholas Georgiadis who designed the aggressively hysteric and over-ornamented set and costumes. These two collaborations suggest that this ballet could have made a more striking impact with a calmer, more ironic score and a much more placid decor; as the work stands it is a woeful monument to the lack of that over-all artistic guidance and suggestive helpfulness that a young choreographer needs at this phase of his career.

A. V. COTON

JEAN Laurent and Maurice Bejart's Ballets de l'Etoile have been invited to the Genoa Festival, where they will present two new ballets *Le Parfum de la Dame en Rouge* (comic-crime) by Jean Laurent, music by Maurice Thiriet, and *Complexes*, story and choreography by Ludmilla Tchérina; the symphonic music for the male dances is by Kosma and the "concrete" music for Tchérina's by Schaeffer.

CHOREOGRAPHIC PRIZES IN PARIS

THE René Blum Prize has been awarded by the Association of Dance Critics and Writers, and is intended to reward some young artist who, without yet having attained a great reputation, has particularly distinguished him or herself during the year. For 1955 the Prize went to Michele Seigneuret, who, in the Ballets de l'Etoile, created Maurice Bejart's work *Symphonie pour un Homme seul*. **Prix Terpsichore:**— This prize was founded by Alice Nikitina, who starred in Diaghilev's Ballet Russes, with the object of discovering youthful talent and awarding bursaries to help young people in their choreographic training. Before a Committee presided over by a Minister, M. Paul-Boncour, and including the principal artistic personalities of Paris, a jury of dance critics awarded two prizes in each class:—Beginners: Francoise Houle, aged 15 years, and Dominique Dubois, aged 8. Juniors: Francoise Zumbo, age 11 years, Sylvaine Paul-Milani, 15 years. *La Scene Francaise*, a well-known Parisian artistic Society, has awarded prizes at its annual competition. Winners were—Mlle. Jacqueline Renoust 1 st. prize for classical dancing. Marie-France Babillot 1st prize for expressive dancing. Sara Acquarone, Turin Choreographic Group, prize for Choreography.

ANDRÉ Roussin, the author of the most popular plays in Paris, is now about to write a ballet libretto. He has suggested to Paul Goubé and Yvonne Alexander, the founders of the Mediterranean Ballets, a story which he has turned into a ballet libretto entitled *Abel*. This work, which will have music by Jacques Laporte and choreography by Paul Goubé, will stage a conflict between two brothers, the younger of whom decapitates the elder with scythe-blows. Jealousy is the motive of the crime, the murderer fears that his brother may take more than his share in the father's farm. Paul Goubé will present *Abel* at the Casino de la Méditerranée at Nice.

THE MARQUIS DE CUEVAS TO CREATE A SNOW BALLET

AT the beginning of March, at Cannes, the Marquis de Cuevas will create *The White Messenger*. This work, written "according to the golden rules of the key to the attitudes" has been "composed" by Nyoka Inyoka on a theme by Bach. The costumes (studio jerseys) and the setting (diorama with film projection of snow and clouds) are by Nyoka Inyoka. The chief dancers will be Serge Golovine (the wind) Jacqueline Moreau (the snow) Vladimir Skouratoff (the sun). Some of the figures will recall all the shapes of snow crystals.

A DANCING ROBOT

MAURICE Bejart has just realised an idea which has been long in his mind. Thanks to Nicolas Schoffer who has constructed a "spatio-dynamic" sculpture sensitive to light and sound, a robot 8 feet high will star, for the first time in a ballet Pas de deux, which will symbolise man's fight against the mastery of the machine. This ballet, in which the human stars will be Michèle Seigneuret and Maurice Bejart, will be presented in April in Paris, either at the Pleyel or at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées.



Above :
Michele Seigneuret, winner of the René Blum Prize 1956.
Below : A scene from the ballet *Le Combat*.



THERE is a discernible movement in Paris against the presence of Serge Lifar as dancer at the Opéra de Paris. Resounding articles have appeared recently, especially in the daily "Le Monde" of 11th January. Lifar is advised to leave the stage—he is thought to be worn out. It so happens that, during a tour in Greece and Egypt, Lifar did declare he was giving up dancing, but when he returned to Paris he said on the radio that he would dance for another five years, after which there would be nothing left for him but to die!

LYCETTE Darsonval and her troupe have just finished a grand tour in Egypt and the Lebanon. Among others Irène Skorik, Gerard Ohn, Violette Lautard and Geneviève Godefroy were included in the group. On the programme, along with fragments of *Giselle*, *Coppelia*, *Swan Lake*, *Sylvia* etc. there were a series of choreographies by Lycette Darsonval—*Le Temple de la Gloire*, (music by Rameau) Saint-Seans' *Rondo Capriccioso*, Rafaelo de Banfield's *Combat* and a *Divertissement* by Gounod. After this tour the show went on to Germany, where they were very successful.

DEATH OF COMTE ETIENNE DE BEAUMONT

FOR over half a century Comte Etienne de Beaumont was known as a patron and a judge of good taste in the world of Paris. As an enlightened amateur he had the skill to recognise the early merit of artistic creators who are now universally admired but were, then, the subjects of passionate controversy. Picasso, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Stravinsky, Jean Cocteau and Henri Sauguet were his friends, as were Marie Laurencin—whom he sheltered during the last war—Christian Bérard and "Coco" Chanel. Simply to list these names gives an idea of the enthusiasm he felt for Diaghilev's Russian Ballets at the end of the first world war, during which he organised an ambulance service for the Armies. His balls, and the concerts which he organised with the help of his wife (whom he had the misfortune to lose recently) were famous. Was not Edouard Bourdet inspired by them to write a satiric comedy *The Rubicon*? The Comte designed settings and costumes for Léonide Massine.

Etienne de Beaumont died painlessly, victim of a cerebral haemorrhage. His many friends filed past his remains, lying below a large Picasso picture.

FERDINAND REYNA

MONTE CARLO



Fonteyn partnered by Gilpin during her previous guest appearance with Festival Ballet in Monte Carlo
Photo: Leon Ward

FESTIVAL Ballet opened the Winter Season here just before Christmas. The Company is well established in the affections of residents and regular winter visitors, and the season has been highly successful, in spite of the strike in the Air Service and the French elections. Their departure on Sunday 22nd January was made the occasion of a final Gala performance, with Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes as guest artists. Skilful arrangement of items in the repertoire enabled us to see a wide range of ballets, with occasional repetition of those of individual appeal. Two new ballets were introduced, both causing great interest and discussion.

Simon Semenoff, of the Stamford Ballet Studio, Connecticut, brought over Melinda Plank, the 14-year old American star, to dance the lead in his ballet *The Gift of the Magi*, with John Gilpin. This is based on the story by O. Henry, in which the young bride sells her hair to buy a chain for her husband's watch.

Unbeknown to her the young man sells his watch to buy a fine comb for the tresses of the wife.

Semenoff's choreography was admirably adapted to the theme and although modern and occasionally acrobatic, remained generally true to the classic tradition. Decor and costumes, by Raoul Pinet du Bois, were brought from New York. The music, by Lucas Foss, was well described by a French critic as 'd'un modernisme prudent et sage'.

Melinda Plank, notwithstanding her age, is not a 'child Prodigy' but a natural dancer of great personal charm. Supple and light, she also displayed considerable dramatic ability. There should be a great future before her. It is doubtful if she could have found a better partner than John Gilpin. The ballet was received with prolonged applause.

A late surprise was the production as world première of the ballet *Les Errants*, by Wolfgang Brunner. This will be known in English as *The Seekers*. It is the

story of two lost souls, wandering on the boundary of the nether world. The Dantesque decor by Dan Snyder was original and particularly effective. Against a background boldly figured in black and white the guardians of Beyond, similarly costumed and made up, could become practically invisible.

Belinda Wright and Michael Hogan, as the lost souls, admirably portrayed the mystic, somewhat macabre story, the effect of which was heightened by the unusual music by Russo. From the enthusiastic reception accorded to this first work of the choreographer it is certain that this curious ballet will be seen in England.

J. R. FARRINGTON



THE WEDDING Fonteyn and Somes to dance with Festival Ballet

FESTIVAL Ballet will give six performances during the wedding celebrations of Miss Grace Kelly and Prince Rainier III. On the 17th April the performance will be in the courtyard facing the Palace. Miss Kelly, the Prince and their guests will be watching from surrounding balconies and windows. On the day of the wedding, the 18th, Dame Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes will dance *Swan Lake, Act II* with Festival Ballet, before the Prince and his bride in the royal box at the Theatre. The following day, 4,000 people will witness another performance by Festival Ballet which will be given at the local Stadium.

Prince Rainier was not able to be present when Fonteyn danced with the Festival Ballet in January as he was then in America, but his sister, Princess Antoinette was able to attend. The Princess has shown great interest in Festival Ballet, who now give regular seasons every year in the Salle Garnier, and has attended rehearsals of this Company.

Col. J. R. Farrington, our correspondent will be reporting on the Monte Carlo wedding celebrations in a forthcoming issue.

SWITZERLAND

SINCE my last report there have been certain changes.

At Lausanne the "Académie Internationale de la Danse", which stood under the patronage of Serge Lifar, had to close its doors. Fortunately there is compensation for this loss, since theatres in German speaking Switzerland are successful in awaking interest in ballet to an evergrowing audience.

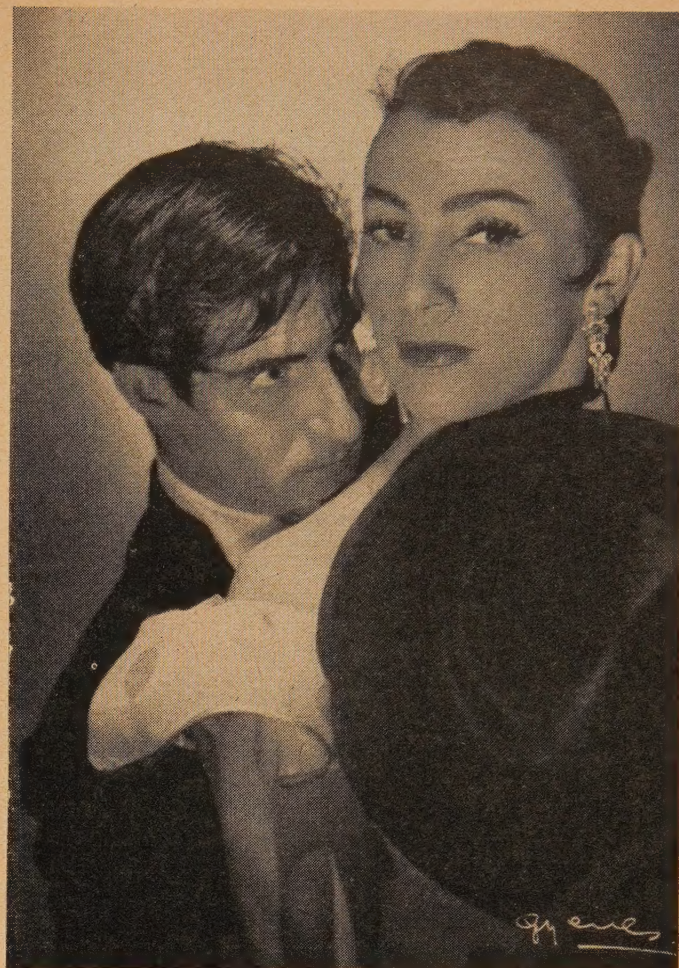
Ballet lovers were very astonished, when they read the announcement of the Zurich opera house, planning to perform a small version of *Swan Lake*. The greater was the astonishment, when in October the Basel Theatre presented a full-length version of the same ballet. No one believed that a ballet troupe of an opera house normally formed by only 12-16 dancers would be able to present an acceptable performance of a great traditional ballet.

The new choreographer of the Basel Theatre, Vaclav Orlikovsky, has tried for years to interest people in Germany in classical and romantic ballet. But he had to experience the sentence, we can read in the informative "Balletbuch" of the outstanding German author on ballet, Otto F. Regner: "Personal passion and belief is not sufficient to conquer the German field". Orlikovsky was fortunate to receive an invitation to Basel, where he was also allowed to

bring the major part of his former company with him. So the group could demonstrate an exceptional exactitude and a homogeneity, so seldom seen in a theatre ballet. The echo was enormous: a series of sold-out performances with grateful audiences.

At the moment now the Zurich company, led by Jaroslav Berger, is preparing its *Swan Lake* with a very young group of mainly Swiss members. The Marquis de Cuevas dancer, Frederic Stebler, has taken over the training of the company as well as the teaching of the senior classes at the Swiss Theatre Dance School. The second ballet performed on the same evening, *The Three Cornered Hat*, is worked out by the competent Spanish couple Susana Audeoud and José Udaeta, known as "Susana y José". After a successful tour through Central Europe they returned to Zurich and taught their style to a group of dancers, skilful in adapting character-dance and castanet-playing. All the costumes had been designed and made in Spain. The two main parts are danced by the Spanish couple, who seem to have—according to the opinion of the Paris critic Jean Silvant—found the solution, of how to transfer Spanish Dancing to the international stage.

WERNER GALLUSSER



Susana and Jose, in the *Three Cornered Hat*, at the Zurich Opera House.
Photo: Gyenes.

CANADA

"WINNIPEG dancers thrill ballet lovers"—so ran the headlines in the Vancouver press, as The Royal Winnipeg Ballet reached the Pacific Coast on a tour of Western Canada in November.

Hailing its appearance the Victoria Daily Times said: "It seems to have retained all that was best of its former self, but there is added a new definition, a discipline of body, form and design . . . Tremendous effect obtained with great simplicity."

Speaking of its opening performances in its home city prior to going on tour, the Winnipeg Tribune described the company as "Glittering brightly with new stars—vitalised by the engagement of the new ballet master, Nenad Lhotka, former star of the Yugoslav State Ballet of Zagreb". All across the West, the tour took

in large cities and small towns and dipped down into the United States to Seattle. Ballet lovers hailed the dancing of such established leads as Carlu Carter and Bill McGrath, and the finely disciplined work of the corps de ballet—giving curtain call after curtain call to two new works in the company's repertoire.

The Devil in the Village, a Yugoslav folk ballet, was abridged by Nenad Lhotka to half its original 2½ hour length, and made its bow to Winnipeg audiences, before going right through to the Pacific Coast.

Paddy Stone, former star of The Royal Winnipeg Ballet and dancer in the Joyce Grenfell Show, is responsible for the other exciting new "show piece" in the company's repertoire. Choreographed by Paddy during the past summer as a token of his affection for the company that

gave him his start, *Clasico* bears the stamp of his vigorous style, based firmly on classical discipline. Insinuating South American rhythms combine with classical forms in an engaging tongue-in-cheek fashion.

Balance of the repertoire taken on tour included a re-choreographed version of Gweneth Lloyd's *Wise Virgins*, now called *Parable*, and a group of classical divertissements.

Back in Winnipeg after this successful tour, The Royal Winnipeg Ballet, under the leadership of Betty Farrally, Artistic Director, will continue re-laying the foundations that were almost literally burned out from under their feet. A major fire destroyed all their properties in June, 1954, and enforced a break of sixteen months while plans were re-organised and a financial campaign undertaken that went victoriously over the top, with more than fifty thousand dollars being raised to "Put the Ballet back on its Toes".

Next step in this rebuilding process will be the addition of still more ballets to the company's

repertoire, and Ruthanna Boris New York choreographer, was engaged to compose a new ballet, commissioned by the Junior League of Winnipeg, which was presented at February performances.

Entitled *Pasticcio* (an Italian word for a dish of many ingredients), but the base, according to the choreographer, is a human being's search for love. The score is by the Italian-American composer, Vittorio Rieti, and was originally written as a two-piano score, but is being re-scored for orchestra. Mr. Rieti enjoys considerable fame as a composer for ballet, having composed for Diaghilev and George Balanchine. He is also the composer of an opera, *Don Perlimplin*, which was premiered at the Paris World Festival in 1952, and his symphonic works have been played by major orchestras on both sides of the Atlantic.

Miss Boris is now touring the United States and the Maritime Provinces with her husband, Frank Hobi, in their own small dance group.



NEW YORK

THE second programme of Antonio and his dancers was given on October 25, 1955. The opening *Rondena* featuring Maria Rosario, Victoria Eugenia, Alicia Diaz and Corps de Ballet, was singularly unimpressive. The second number, *The Martinete*, so the programme tells us, belongs to the most ancient group of serious Flamenco songs called the "Cante Grande". It has no musical accompaniment and in the past was sung in the blacksmith's shop to the sound of the hammer and anvil. In its present form, *The Martinete* is perhaps the most perfect example of Antonio's fantastic technique that his repertoire can afford. It is composed of a series of largo sections rising slowly to a crescendo. The entire closing section features a display of heel technique building to a dramatic climax of dynamic tension. Antonio is like some finely trained animal with every fibre vibrating and every nerve attuned. The Spartan counterpoint of the anvil beat against the oriental opulence of Flamenco singing sets the entire solo into silhouette. Antonio is given excellent support by the Flamenco singer Antonio Mairena and Pepe Soler as the Blacksmith.

The Andaluza with Rosita Segovia is a pleasant, though somewhat innocuous piece, useful ostensibly to show off Miss Segovia's vibrant personality.

The Spanish Sonatas music by Father Soler, can only be class-

ified as something which should not have happened. Antonio seems to have one failing and that is to introduce ballet into his numbers; ostensibly ballet as danced by himself and one or two other persons of questionable technique.

The Suite of Basque Dances which closed the first half of the programme are pleasant, lively folk dances, composed not for their excitement, but for their amiable fiesta-like flavour. With the exception of the *Auresku* for eight boys, the dances are for the most part charming if not handsome. This section obviously formed less along the lines of Traditional folk dance, contains much unrewarding balletic choreography. There are a series of kicks in line which are strangely reminiscent of the rockettes and grotesque in to the bargain. In the second part of the programme, easily the best dances are those featuring Antonio in solo work. *The Disdainful Segovien* is a short little story, full of peasant humour, which utilizes wonderful castinet playing.

* * *

After six months of travelling, the New York City Ballet returned to its home theatre, the New York City Center. The programme opened with a lyrical

AMERICA

Hope Sheridan

performance of *Serenade* which always provides a workable framework for the various talents of the companies ballerinas. Opening night's performance was danced by Patricia Wilde, Diana Adams, Melissa Hayden and Yvonne Mounsey. Novelty of the evening was Jerome Robbins' *Age of Anxiety*. Now a seldom performed work, this does not hold up under the passing of the years. Its emptiness is apparent although there is no dearth of choreographic invention. *Sylvia*; *Pas de deux*, heralded the return of Maria Tallchief. The audience gave her a rousing welcome. Eglevsky danced beautifully with the rare élan and elegance of the old Imperial dancer. It is easy to forget what this looks like. The evening closed with Balanchine's *Western Symphony*, this time in excellent costumes designed by Karinska against John Boyt's scenery. The satire and wit of this number are accentuated by the costumes and scenery. I have never had the chance to see them before. Newest casting is Arthur Mitchell, a fine young dancer, taking Jacques D'Amboise's place.

The next evening offered as its piece de resistance a new work by George Balanchine set to music from Glazounov's *Raymonda*. The new *Pas de dix*, performed without setting in costumes by

Esteban Frances, was created for Maria Tallchief and Andre Eglevsky with a company of eight. Although this work is ostensibly a grand pas in the Petipa style, it is based upon character material. Just beneath the surface there lurks a czardas though the dancers only occasionally break out into the actual arms-crossed-czardas attitudes and steps. Classic in form, the *Pas de dix* consists of a grand entrée and adagio, two solos and a duo for the girls, a four-some for the boys, a variation each for the prima ballerina and premier danseur and a grand coda. The hardest and most thankless task of the evening easily falls to Andre Eglevsky, for Balanchine has given him difficult virtuoso work in what is altogether an ugly variation with many back-breaking subtleties which go unnoticed. Tallchief fares better for her variation is of a flashier nature, and she acquits herself of its technical requirements with ease. I'm sorry to say that Miss Tallchief's sojourn with the Ballet Russe has produced distinct deterioration in her stage manners. Apparent in both opening night and in the *Pas de Dix* was a rudeness to her partner which breaks one of the manifest thou-shalt-nots of classical ballet. We hope this back-sliding will disappear as the season progresses. Barbara Fallis and Constance Garfield carry their solos well, as did Jane Mason and Barbara Wolzak in a little *pas de deux*.

A second new ballet to be given was *Souvenirs*. A work by Todd Bolender based on a score by Samuel Barber enlarged and orchestrated from a suite of piano pieces. Scenery and costumes by Roubin Ter-Arutunian. The scene is the Royal Palms Hotel presumably just pre-World War I. The action carries us to the hotel's lobby, ballroom, a hallway, a bedroom and beach. Here are vignettes the chance meetings, flirtations, dreams and seductions of some of its guests. Each episode is static, in fact, almost lacking any kind of discernible choreography. The style is that

of the old-fashioned silent movie. Highlight of the ballet is a vamping scene between Theda Bara—like Irene Larsson and John Mandia in the best “kiss me, my fool” tradition. The costumes steal the show for they are hilarious. Unfortunately the ballet is not. While there is a great deal of stage action there is a paucity of wit and real humour. A cast headed by Jillana, Todd Bolender, John Mandia, Irene Larsson, Roy Tobias, Wilma Curly, Robert Barnett, Herbert Bliss, Edith Brozak, Ann Cromwell and Carolyn George give this good-natured try their all.

Jeux D'Enfants was presented with new choreography by George Balanchine, Francesco Moncion and Barbara Milberg. Set to a group of short pieces by George Bizet, *Jeux D'Enfants* boasts stunning costumes and imaginative decor by Esteban Frances inspired by 18th and 19th century Nuremburg wooden toys. It is enough to say that this may be another ballet for the children's matinee. The costumes alone would make it a joy for the tots, but it is neither a delightful nor interesting ballet. There is not a nickel's worth of choreography “so-who-did-what” scarcely matters. It is a long tedious, static

work. The one rather charming pas de deux between a Wooden Soldier and his love, the Doll, ends with her demise in the fireplace. This scene is in such shocking bad taste that one is horrified to find it in a ballet at all, much less one designed for the kiddies. The Bizet music is charming, as Bizet usually is, but in that lies the sole charm of the ballet. Mellisa Hayden, Roy Tobias and a large cast work hard for little compensation.

Left : New York City Ballet in Swan Lake. Yvonne Mounsey, Maria Tallchief, Pat Wilde and Andre Eglevsky.

CHICAGO

AS shabby as a Santa Claus stuck in the chimney, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo came to the Civic Opera House for a week beginning Christmas Day. Despite Santa's generally disordered and untidy appearance, there were several bright items in his pack.

By far the brightest was *La Dame à la Licorne* by Jean Cocteau, the best new ballet seen in Chicago during 1955. It was not, however, given an ideal production by Ballet Russe. The girls of the corps were not up to the split second timing which the choreography for the unicorns demands; Nina Novak's classic proportions were not suited for the role of the white unicorn (a more eccentric dancer like Tanaquil LeClerq is needed); also, Cocteau's decors were not as well realised as in the original German production of the ballet. Beyond these limitations, the moving performances of Frederic Franklin as the knight and Irina Borowska as the lady suggested the true quality of the work.

The ballet's story is simple. A lady loses her virginity and mourns it so much that she also loses her new love; entirely alone, her motto is “Mon Seul Desir”. It is simply told in the movements of classical ballet, natural mime and clear symbols. Despite the great economy of all elements of the production, their combined effect evoked the richness of the Gobelin tapestries, *à la Licorne*, which inspired the work.

In employing the French composer, Jacques Chailley, and the young Swiss-German choreographer Heinz Rosen, Cocteau has discovered two outstanding talents. Like many of the younger continental choreographers, Rosen's use of academic ballet is much less intricate than Lifar's or Balanchine's baroque, Ashton's or Wallmann's rococo, or Lander's lyricism. But, whereas one often suspects the other young choreographers of being

simple because their vocabulary and imaginations are limited, Rosen's sparse use of movement seems intentional and purposeful. Like Monteverdi's music over three hundred and fifty years ago, Rosen's choreography may initiate a fruitful reaction against an era of complexity.

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo danced no other new ballets. In a repertory of poorly edited classics and unrehearsed Massine and Cobos comedies, only *Swan Lake* (Act 2) and the reconsidered Fokine *Scheherazade* stood out. The choreography for the former, (presumably by Frederic Franklin and Michel Katcharoff), is far superior to Balanchine's and Dolin's popular editions. In this production, Alicia Alonso, who seems to have been watching films of Ulanova, has at last realised her interpretation of Odette.

Alonso, with this company for the first time, disappointed her admirers by dancing no new roles. The only possible artistic justification for her move from Ballet Theatre would have been the opportunity to see her in *Coppelia*, *Raymonda*, *Blue Danube* or *Gaité Parisienne*. But perhaps she was wise, for Youskevitch did himself no credit in a new role (the knight in the Cocteau ballet) or in the Massine ballets which he had once danced; in these Frederic Franklin is master.

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo's male contingent, which also includes Leon Danielian, Victor Moreno, Joseph Savino and Miguel Terekhov, was particularly strong and virile despite one incredibly effeminate soloist. As last year, the female contingent was weak, although Yvonne Chouteau danced very well and the usually colourless Gertrude Tyven was the only one who caught the spirit of *Les Sylphides*.

GEORGE JACKSON

Right : Jocelyn Vollmar in Don Quixote, which she is dancing with great success in the course of the present Australian tour of the Borovansky Ballet.



HOW A BALLET IS BORN

An interview by ELIZABETHE CORATHIEL

WITH

Frederick Ashton

Associate Director
of the
Sadler's Wells Ballet



Frederick Ashton

Photo George Platt-Lynes

THERE is something mysterious and intriguing about choreography. Rarely, if ever, is an outsider permitted to penetrate the inner fastness of the rehearsal studio while a ballet is being born. Choreographers are the shyest of creatures when grappling with the complexities of a new work. They approach with almost superstitious awe those fleeting inspirations which must be 'caught on the wing', as it were, and often quite defy the limitations of mere language. They can only be danced. Here, indeed, is ground where angels fear to tread, and everything depends upon the close sympathy between the creator and his instrument—the receptivity of the sensitive artist through whose technique the choreographer's ideas will find expression.

Not until the ballet has had its première, and is fully established in the repertoire, will its creator submit to criticism. Even then so much depends upon the individual approach, the personal *je ne sais quoi* which every great artist brings to the performance, the fine-strung, nervous poetry of motion which creates new beauty before our very eyes with every unwearied repetition. A breath, and it is gone; but it is this miracle of perpetual recreation at every inspired performance which places ballet

in a distinct class among the arts, and makes the dancer supreme among artists. No wonder the choreographer must insist upon the strictest privacy, while concentrating in the throes of creation.

Frederick Ashton had the impression that critics who referred to his latest ballet, *La Péri*, as a mere re-hash of an earlier work of his, were doing him less than justice. After all, painters often re-work the same theme. "The original 'Péri', although based on the same theme", he told me, "was nothing like so comprehensive, despite the fact that it had a corps de ballet of six, in addition to the two principals. For one thing, I did not use all the music, which plays for twenty minutes; and as funds would not run to an orchestra, it had to be limited to the piano, which meant a great sacrifice of richness and beauty. Persian miniatures were the main inspiration of the 'Péri' I created twenty-five years ago. It was an example of my experience as a choreographer at that time—but a quarter-century makes a big difference in a man's life. One's outlook broadens, and this is bound to be reflected in one's later work.

"If any explanation is necessary for my turning to *La Péri* a second time, I think it should be sufficient to say that the music

fascinated me. Now that I had a full orchestra at my command, the temptation to utilise the full-length score was irresistible. Moreover, Miss Fonteyn wanted a *pas de deux* which she could present without great scenic demands when she went on tour. Something that would be colourful, exotic, original and yet true to classical standards. It was a challenge—and *La Péri* seemed the perfect answer.

"There were many fascinating choreographic problems to be solved, not least among them the question of introducing oriental dance-forms. We did not wish to stress these to the point of pedantry. Miss Fonteyn's lovely hand movements and the sparing use of the neck-jerk provide just sufficient colour to support the Eastern theme, without departing from the classical frame-work. That, at least, was the effect at which we jointly aimed.

"No, I am not disproportionately attracted to Eastern themes" Mr. Ashton continued in answer to my question, "although I must admit that *La Péri*, coming so soon after *Madame Chrysanthème*, might give that impression.

"The inspiration for the Japanese ballet had a quite different origin. It came to me through reading Pierre Loti. I have never been to Japan, and really

have only the vaguest notion of life and dance in that country, so I must confess that when some friends of mine, who know Nippon well, came to see the ballet, I warned them not to expect too much. It was quite pleasant to gather from their comments afterwards that it seemed to create an authentic atmosphere. A choreographer, in my opinion, must fix on one particular aspect in order to put his idea over, and stress that aspect for all he is worth.

"How is a ballet born? One cannot generalise. It depends entirely on the circumstances. Take *Scenes de Ballet*, for instance. That came about through my hearing, quite by chance, part of a musical programme on the radio. I hadn't even heard the announcement—the programme was half-way through before I became aware of it. This was during the War. I rang up the B.B.C. immediately to ask the composer's name, and learned that it was Stravinsky. Then I started haunting the music shops and gramophone counters; but all in vain, I could not trace the music, and as it was war-time, there was no means of getting it. Eventually the B.B.C. very kindly came to my assistance and from their recording I built up the whole ballet, which is now one of my favourites".



Photo: Mike Davis

MARGOT FONTEYN AS LA PÉRI

La Péri

Poème Dansé

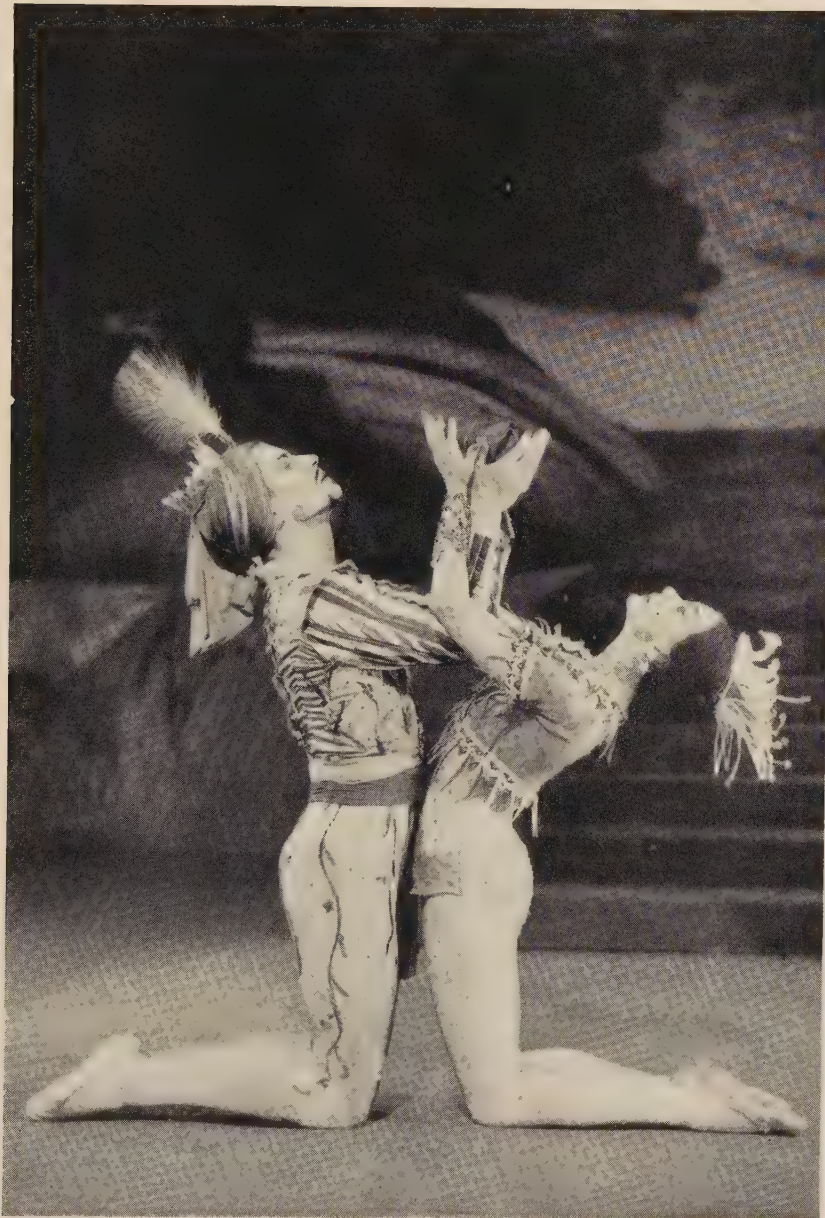
Music by Paul Dukas

Choreography by Frederick Ashton

Scenery by Ivon Hitchens

Costumes by André Levasseur

La Péri	..	..	..	MARGOT FONTEYN
Iskender	..	..	..	MICHAEL SOMES



"It came about that, at the end of the day, Iskender observed that his star was paling, like the Flower of Immortality.

The sun dwelt thrice in its twelve hours at the extremities of the Earth.

And there, on the steps leading to the palace, she stretched, sleeping in her robe of purple, and in her hand shone the Flower.

And it was a lotus like unto an evening sun.

Iskender leaned noiselessly over her, and saw away the Flower.

Which suddenly became, between the trees of the forests of Ghilan.

But the Péri, opening her eyes, saw him, and the other and uttered a loud cry.

For no longer could she reascend to the sun.

But Iskender, contemplating her, saw that she had the delights even those of Gurdaferrid.

And he lusted after her in his heart, and he knew that in such a way that the Péri knew.

For in Iskender's right hand, the Flower of Immortality.

Thus, the servant of the Pure One, Iskender intended for him.

And to regain it she darted forth, and she moved. While the Invincible Lord moved, and he thirsted for immortality and the delectation of the sun.

But the Péri danced the dance of the sun, drawing ever nearer, until her face shone like the sun.

And at the end he gave her back the Flower, and the lotus seemed like snow under the evening sun.

Then the form of Péri appeared to him, and Iskender saw her disappear.

And realizing that this signified the end, he felt the shadow encircling him.



First performed at the Royal Opera House

Covent Garden, London

by the Sadler's Wells Ballet

15th February, 1956

Photos :

centre

Mike Davis

below (l and r)

Houston Rogers

ys of his youth, the Mages having
andered through Iran, seeking the

thout his finding it, until he reached

courtyards of Ormuzd, a péri was
ils. A star sparkled above her head,

ndulating like the sea in the morning

er and, without awaking her, took

gers, like the mid-day sun over the

palms of her hands one against the

the light of Ormuzd.

d her features, which surpassed in

's thought.

ed purple, like the face of desire.

y that this Flower of Life was not

a bee.

us away from her, torn between his
s eyes.

d the face of Iskender.

er without regret.

d like the summit of Elbourz in the

o the light emanating from the calyx.

uching end





Photo: Houston Rogers

MICHAEL SOMES AS ISKENDER

MUSICIAN

AT THE

BALLET

BY

MONTAGUE CALMAN



Robert Irving

Photo: Paul Tanqueray.

DOWN in the orchestra pit the conductor waves his baton. The musicians play, the dancers move, but we the audience cannot see the expression on the conductor's face. What is he thinking about?

The Sadler's Wells Ballet musical adviser, Robert Irving, tells us his views in the superbly produced book *Gala Performance**. Under the title *Music and the Ballet* he has much of musical interest to say about the conductor's place in the ballet company. Courageously he asserts that the question of tempo is one for the conductor to decide. "It is not wise to take the opinions of the dancers too literally", he warns.

Irving is not too keen about the acoustics of the Royal Opera House. He says the Grand Tier is the worst place to hear ballet music. His advice is: Go to the cheapest upper seats.

I think he is wrong when he says only the dancers really know how a conductor can make or mar a performance. People are beginning to realise how vital music is in ballet, and there is now a greater consciousness of the part played by the conductor in making a performance more than just an evening at the theatre. To succeed he must make it an exciting experience every night.

I am glad to read he thinks *burning enthusiasm* a quality required for working with a theatre orchestra. Why not let us have some more of it, then, from the orchestra pit?

As a conductor Robert Irving has given some magnificent performances at Covent Garden, but two recent evenings were disappointing. I admit Prokofiev's score for *Cinderella* is not the ideal lyrically romantic music for this fairy tale. Yet the music has fine creative orchestral qualities, if they are studied and brought out. Though to make anything of it the playing must be brilliant, and burning with the fire of vitality.

In *Music and the Ballet*, Irving alleges that acoustics of the Royal Opera House lack vividness and brilliance. That may be so but the absence of glitter in *Cinderella* was due to a sagging tempo and a missing virility

in the orchestral playing.

I can sympathise with any conductor who has to repeatedly face the score of *Le Lac des Cygnes*, it may become hackneyed boredom after a time. And on that night Covent Garden was giving us the 162nd performance. Still as Irving has acknowledged, "The public frankly prefer Tchaikovsky" to other composers. If that is so, only the best playing is good enough for them. Tchaikovsky's music needs to be sung orchestrally. The lyrical music craves this operatic treatment from every section of the orchestra.

Let us take a few instances. The gaiety and feasting in the Garden of the Castle in Act I calls for the sweet cry from the woodwinds. But why were they so sad that evening? An oboe can reach into one's heart. Yet for the Act II opening, when the lovely *leitmotif* of the swans is Tchaikovsky at his sweetest,

the Covent Garden oboe was not burning with any enthusiasm.

Perhaps Act III was the most unsatisfactory musically. *The Czardas* certainly had no Russian vitality. While the *Spanish Dance* had the phoney liveliness of a pier-end military band swinging New Orleans jazz.

It may be that the spell of Tchaikovsky is broken for the Covent Garden orchestra. But since Irving has told us in cold print how much a conductor can do, then he must do it. He can.

LA PÉRI

There is nothing so tragic as to see great talent squandered. To watch the effortless artistry of Fonteyn is to see the poetry and music of the dance. She is obviously the *prima ballerina assoluta*. While to see *Somes* tackle choreographic movements likely to terrify an athlete, is a revelation. Why then waste

so much on so little as Ashton did in *La Péri*? Paul Dukas' musical poem is a colourless cocktail pretending to be part Eastern, part Occidental. But the brew is an unexotic mixture of tame strings and occasional savage thrusts of percussive orchestra. It does not evoke the strange story of the poem.

George Weldon made the most of the music and the Royal Opera Orchestra did as well as can be expected in the tragic circumstances.

FOLK DANCING

Shortage of space last month prevented me recording a refreshing interlude in my ballet going. And I expect many ballet controllers envied the organisers of that evening: The English Folk Dance and Song Society (Royal Albert Hall). These international folk-lore specialists have no trouble with new ballets and the conductor problem just does not exist for them. And they certainly have loads of burning enthusiasm, which they shed into the audience.

From France we had *Lei Tambourinaire de Sant Sumain*, a dance group with three musicians. Each musician holds a three holed flute, a *Galoubet*, in his left hand while his free hand beats out the rhythm from a small drum, the *Tambour*, strapped across the left side of his body. The general effect is much like the English Morris Dance pipe and tabor accompaniment.

I was intrigued by an entry in the programme against the Isle of Man's *Dirk Dance*, *The Kings of Man*, which read "Mouth Music". It turned out to be an unaccompanied vocal melody sweetly given by Aileen Hall.

Yugo-Slavian dances were presented by the *Balkanska Berreda Group*, whose accompanist Jivoin Popovic, on the accordion, produced a haunting Eastern charm.

This evening was a fascinating peep into the past history of the dance. Certainly many of London's dancers and ballet musicians could have learned a good deal about enthusiasm, freshness and burning vitality, from these young and keen amateurs.

**Gala Performance*—edited by Arnold Haskell, Mark Bonham Carter and Michael Wood; published by Collins at 42s.; proceeds to the Sadler's Wells School Endowment Fund.

The picture-record of *La Péri* contained in this issue is the fifth in this series. Copies are still available of:—

Rinaldo and Armida and Variations on a Theme of Purcell	March 1955
Madame Chrysanthème	May 1955,
House of Birds	July 1955
The Death of Giselle (Fonteyn and <i>Somes</i>) ..	Dec. 1955

Price 1/- each issue, (plus postage—on single copies 3d., on four copies 6d.)

NEXT MONTH "NOCTAMBULES"

NEW RECORDS

BEETHOVEN'S 5TH SYMPHONY and ABSCHUELUCKER ! from FIDELIO. E. Schwarzkopf (soprano), Philharmonia Orchestra (Karajan). Columbia 33CX1266.

Karajan has already given us a good rendering of the Fifth, which Jane Laouste choreographed for her ballet on the life of Beethoven. Now he draws from that masterly assembly of musicians, the Philharmonia, an even finer one which rings out triumphantly. And for good measure, the famous aria from Beethoven's only opera is included on the second side with that accomplished singer, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, in excellent form.

RHAPSODY IN BLUE and CONCERTO IN F (Gershwin). S. Bianco (piano), Hamburg Pro Musica (H-J. Walther). Parlophone PMC1026.

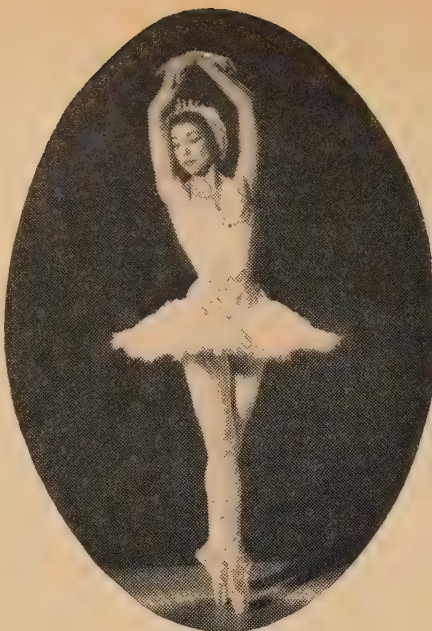
Last November I reviewed this coupling on Decca LXT 5069, but I failed to mention that the concerto had also been used for Larsen's ballet, *Desire* for the Royal Danish Ballet. On this new issue Bianco is very hard and harsh—in fact bashes it out with little of the sweeping lyricism that made Katchen's and Mantovani's performance so taking. It is cheaper but in this case finance would not persuade me.

EL SALON MEXICO (Copland). LA CREATION DU MONDE (Milhaud). Conductor, Leonard Bernstein. Philips NBR 6019.

The increase of contemporary American works in the LP catalogues is most welcome and here we have Doris Humphrey's ballet on the theme of a Mexican peon dreaming of his loves. It is certainly a colourful score and receives energetic but sound treatment at the hands of another American composer. He also does justice to Milhaud's work which has inspired several choreographers, including de Valois, Borlin and de Mille. There is little to criticise in this record.

AMERICAN CONCERTETTE and SPIRITUALS (Gould). Cor de Groot (piano), Hague P. O. (Otterloo). Philips ABR 4045.

It was to the concertette that Robbins set his gay, light-hearted ballet, *Interplay*, and



it would give me the greatest delight to see this sparkling little work danced again in this country by Ballet Theatre—it abounded with such youth and high spirits. The recording and Otterloo's interpretation have everything to recommend it, which applies equally to the coupling.

THE FIRE BIRD (Stravinsky). Suisse Romande Orchestra (Ansermet). Decca LXT 5115.

Not only is this complete but it is also an outstanding performance, evoking the very essence of Fokine's entrancing ballet. Ansermet so effectively brings out all the subtleties and air of mystery in Stravinsky's imaginative score. It matches the Sadler's Wells magnificent and faithful production, which through Karsavina's and Grigoriev's help, has never been surpassed by any previous revival. Together with an excellent recording, this is a record that no balletgoer can afford to be without.

THE LADY AND THE FOOL (Verdi). Philharmonia Orchestra (Mackerras). HMV. CLP 1059.

Here is another excellent record, which I know will be popular. Mackerras must be wholeheartedly congratulated for his arrangement of music from lesser known operas of

Reviewed by BEDFORD CROWLE

Verdi—and incidentally for his excellent notes on the record sleeve—as well as his conducting. Personally I was pleased at the transfer of Cranko's ballet, in its re-arranged version, to Covent Garden. Like the music, it is the spaciousness, the grand manner and the bold gestures that make it so suitable for this famous stage. Mackerras gives us all this in his recording, the crescendo at times piling up almost dangerously high.

Kodaly's *Galanta Dances*, HMV. DLP 1100, are well worthwhile adding to one's collection—Cameron's rendering is definitely good. So is the Dance of the Persian Slaves from Moussorgsky's *Khovantchina*, Columbia SEL 1542—apart from the harshness in the brass section. Arthur Fiedler's records of Strauss Polkas and Waldteufel's Waltzes, HMV. CLP 1065, and the *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*, HMV. 7EP7022, are beautifully clear and bright but his conducting is as straight as a poker. Ormandy errs at the other extreme—his performances of *Les Sylphides* and *Gaité Parisienne*, Philips NBL 5019, are unbelievably lush.

A MOZART BIOGRAPHY.

In this bi-centenary year of Mozart's birth, we must not forget that the great composer wrote for the great ballet master, Noverre, the music for the ballet *Les Petits Riens*; and that his music is increasingly used by modern choreographers. A short biography written by Donald Mitchell and published by Decca to mark this year has just reached me. The fifty six pages give a graphic and surprisingly full account of Mozart's life and works, and include musical examples and well-chosen excerpts from his correspondence and that of his family. Its many illustrations are taken from contemporary paintings and portraits, photographs of letters and musical MS., as well as pictures of stage productions. Attractively produced, it is well worth its five shillings and sixpence.

NIGHTS AT THE BALLET.

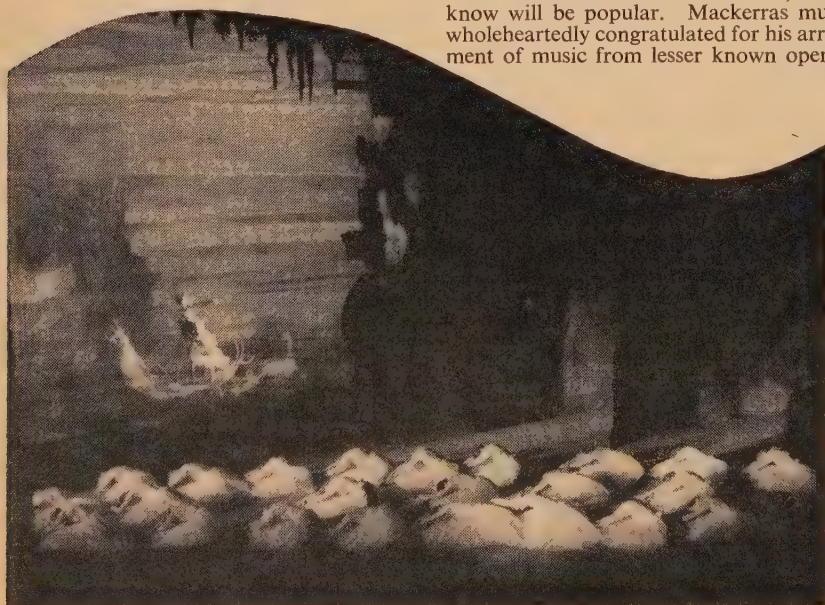
In *Nights at the Ballet*, E.M.I. have brought out a new idea in record catalogues. The music available on their LP recordings, whether arranged or specially composed, has been grouped under the titles of the various ballets with which it is connected (information rarely given on the theatre programme). It is an impressive list for it includes something like 140 ballets while the range of music covered is equally striking. At a glance, one is able to see what recordings are available for such famous ballets as *Swan Lake*—which has six recordings!—old favourites such as *Le Jardin aux Lilas*, or the more obscure *Five Gifts* by William Dollar. Organisers of ballet and record recitals for clubs and societies must find it of special value, while all lovers of music for the ballet will enjoy browsing through these pages which are interspersed with articles by Pigeon Crowle that are both informative and entertaining. These articles are well illustrated with photographs, and I especially liked a fine action shot of George Skibine and the charming First Act picture for *Coppelia*. The cover is an excellent colour reproduction of Degas' famous ballerina with its glimpse of the corps de ballet in the wings. In all, very good value for one shilling.

Two of the photographs from
"Nights at the Ballet".

Top: Margot Fonteyn

Photo: Houston Rogers

Left: Le Lac des Cygnes Photo: Baron



Flamenco

Dancing and Dancers

By David Benn

PART THREE THE AESTHETIC BACKGROUND

WHAT is the flamenco dancer trying to express? To answer this we must try to unravel a little the complex character of the native of Andalusia. Many a tourist has tried this and come back baffled. Indeed it is a baffling subject. I can certainly offer no "nut-shell" explanation. What we can do, in fact all we can do, is to make a few observations.

Firstly, where is the comparison between the proud, reserved, almost haughty Spanish señorita and the wild joyous bailerina we see on the stage and in fiestas. The answer to this lies in a word which linguists have long sought to explain—*vergüenza*. Literally translated it means shame. The worst thing one can say about a Spaniard is that he or she is "*sin vergüenza*" or without shame, without principles. The most cherished quality in a woman is her *vergüenza*. If she is haughty it is for fear of endangering her *vergüenza* by being thought forward.

Even today, however, the gypsies are inevitably labelled "*sin vergüenza*". This is why the Spanish girl puts on gypsy costume to dance. While she wears that dress everyone recognises that she has temporarily cast aside her *vergüenza*. She is free to express her feelings and her other self, which in all other walks of life must be suppressed, to the full. The dance becomes a symbol of joyous liberty of self expression.

This, however, is only part of the picture. It would be quite easy to regard flamenco as an expression of the gaiety of Andalusia but this would be to miss the whole point of it. That the element of gaiety is predominant cannot be denied both in the character and the dances of Andalusia. What is harder to see is that this is only superficial. Under this facade of gaiety lies a deep inner longing which amounts to sadness. We have only to read any of the works of García Lorca, aptly described as "the true mirror of the Andalusian scene" to find this inner longing, tragic because it can never be satisfied. The discerning listener will find the same element of sadness in the works of Manuel de Falla, especially in his operas. It is this frustrated longing which, far more than gaiety, has created the traditional art, including the dance of Andalusia. The gypsies have tried to sum it up in a verse in their *calo* language.

"Peno men ducas guiyabando
sos guiyabar sino orobar.
Peno retejos querelando
sos querelar sina guirrar."
(I tell my sorrows singing
because to sing is to cry.
I tell my joys dancing
because to dance is to laugh.)



But to dance can be to cry as well. We have only to look at the face of Antonio in any of the countless action photographs available. The expression on his face in the flamenco numbers conveys far more than mere physical exertion. The dancer who best expresses this spiritual hunger is Manolo Vargas. This Mexican born dancer has absorbed all the emotion and *estampa* (an indefinable word but a quality without which no one could dance flamenco) of the Andalusian and Pilar Lopez's company is indescribably poorer for the loss of him.

The sensuous element, which disgusted so many in the past, has, of course, in deference to the conventions of the modern stage, been minimised, but it cannot and must not be ignored. Generally the same element pervades nearly every form of Andalusian traditional art. In the gypsy legend immortalised in the famous poem of García Lorca "*Preciosa y el aire*" (*Preciosa and the wind*) the wind itself is a sensuous probing being which chases the gypsy girl, *Preciosa*, into the house of the Consul of the English. The entire art of the gypsy, and indeed of the Andalusian, is expressive of a struggle between two opposing forces—desire and honour. Honour destroys the mind but it must be forced to win because desire destroys life itself. It is this inner struggle which lies at the root of the unspeakable sadness which every Andalusian artist knows only too well.

One of the dances most expressive of this inner sadness is the *Olé Gaditano* (*olé* of Cadiz) seen in England under the simple title *Olé*. *Olé* is essentially a cry of joy but with its movements which demand such bodily flexibility (the final movement is for the bailerina to kneel on one knee and touch her heel with the top of her head) and its music in 3/8 time it is this dance which expresses all the sadness of Andalusia which seems more prominent among the gypsies of Cadiz than any other part of Southern Spain.

One of the dances most expressive of the sensuous element was, and to some extent still is, the *Rondeña* or *Malagueña* under which latter title it has been seen in England danced by Teresa and Luisillo, and of course Rosario and Antonio. This dance, whose music by Ernesto Lecuona nearly every ballet lover will know, has suffered many changes. Originally it told a definite story. A young *mala-guena* (lady of Malaga) kneels in the centre, her face hidden by a fan. A handsome young *torero* enters and dances around her in an effort to get a glimpse of her face. Finally he succeeds and, throwing his cloak around her, imprisons her in it and makes to carry her away. This dance is very rarely seen in this form, even in Spain, today, but for the discerning observer the basic movements are still there.

(Above : Antonio)

Continued on page 22

THE SIXTH ANNUAL

Butlin's

DANCING FESTIVAL and CONGRESS

combining

THE THIRD BUTLIN
JUVENILE DANCING FESTIVAL

FILEY HOLIDAY CAMP

JUVENILE WEEK

Harry Parry & his Orchestra

August 25th – September 1st, 1956.

Competitions in all Stage Branches and including
The British Junior and Senior Tap Championships
and the British Junior and Senior Ballet
Championship.

Modern and Old Time Ballroom Competitions,
Formation and Dual Dancing.

ADULT FESTIVAL

Harry Davidson & his Old Time Orchestra

Harry Parry & his Orchestra

September 1st – September 8th, 1956.

Old Time and Modern Amateur and Professional
Championships; Old Time and Modern Trophies;
Old Time and Modern Formation Team Trophies;
Cabaret and Ballroom Exhibition Trophies; Veter-
ans' Competitions and Dual Dancing.

NOW AVAILABLE ADVANCE SYLLABUS

and Accommodation details from

Festival Organiser, Butlin's Ltd.,
439 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

Tel: MAYfair 9811

Ballet

Home Practice for Beginners

THALIA MARA

with

LEE WYNDHAM

Tamara Karsavina writes: "This is a most useful guide to home practice. Home practising, while a great help to children, has its dangers. This book on basic exercises gives a clear warning against these dangers — the incorrect stance, the common faults. It is based on sound knowledge of technique. The explanations and diagrams show clearly how 'to do' and how 'not to do'. The comic little drawings of 'Do not do this' have their pedagogical value as well.

"I fully share the views of Thalia Mara on the Russian-Italian School of technique. The happy blend of these two gave us many a wonderful dancer."

2nd Imp. Illustrated 8s 6d

CONSTABLE & CO. LTD.

10 ORANGE STREET LONDON W.C.2

BURNETS

Established 1832

for
THEATRICAL FABRICS
and
ACCESSORIES

★
Elastic Fish-Net TIGHTS
and OPERA HOSE
Cotton or Wool TIGHTS
LEOTARDS, GLOVES
BELTS etc.

★
STAGE CURTAINS
made to order
Curtain Tracks Supplied



Price list on application

B. BURNET & Co. Ltd.

22 GARRICK STREET LONDON W.C.2

Tel. TEMple Bar 3972 & 4893

BOOKS

reviewed
by

Pigeon Crowle

Lichine's extraordinary leap in the Blue Bird variation in Aurora's Wedding (Riabouchinska kneeling). This photograph, one of many brilliant studies by Merlyn Severn in her book Double Exposure, was taken at the rail of the orchestra pit in the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.



Ballet and Camera. By John Hart. (Chatto & Windus, 10s. 6d.)

Dancers must be very content to pose for this latest recruit to the ranks of ballet photographers. Sustained and continuous perfection in movement is an ideal almost unobtainable, and the work of even the greatest dancers contains flaws that pass unnoticed in action but may be recorded forever with the click of a camera. All dancers suffer from the photographer who cares little about balletic technicalities as long as he gets his picture, but here is one whose approach is that of the dancer as well as the photographer.

John Hart has been a member of the Sadler's Wells Ballet since 1938, excepting the war years when he was in the R.A.F. He has danced all the principal parts in the classical ballets and a wide range of other roles; and he is now maitre de ballet of the company, a position which gives him the unique opportunity of photographing artists as he sees them at work on and off stage.

The forty-seven illustrations are well set out and taken from class, rehearsal and performance, including *Madame Chrysanthème*, *Variations on a Theme of Purcell*, and *Rinaldo and Armida*. At present, a little more variety is needed generally, but this will come when time has built up the material for a wider selection. My favourites are a most expressive study of dressing-gowned dancers as they stand in the wings, shouting their "Olé's" before the curtain rises on *Tricorne*, and a beauty of Violetta Elvin in *Lac*.

There is a foreword by Dame Ninette de Valois.

Ballet Carnival. By Margaret Crosland. (Arco, 21s.)

A book of this description can be most useful either as a work of reference or as a guide for the young new-comer, but it is essential, in the first instance, that it is accurate and it should in the second, have some feeling for atmosphere and action.

The writer has industriously assembled the stories of some 162 ballets ranging from *Adam Zero* to *La Sylphide* together with a number of biographical notes, a glossary, and a list of recorded music, but the style is commonplace, unlit by true perception, and besprinkled with clichés. Little attempt has been made to relate action and choreography and the pages are scattered with inaccuracies.

The book has an air of having been flung together. There is no index, the contents have been listed without their individual page numbers, and the illustrations are lumped together in two sections. I fear it does not altogether live up to the publisher's blurb which claims that "everything you ever wanted to know about the world of

ballet will be found in the magnificent book you are now holding in your hands".

Double Exposure. By Merlyn Severn. (Faber, 21s.)

THE action photograph is now so taken for granted that one is inclined to forget that not very many years ago the vast majority of ballet photographs were of dancers in pre-arranged poses which often bore only a vague resemblance to those actually used in the ballet portrayed. Merlyn Severn changed all that and revolutionised the art of ballet photography when her book, *Ballet in Action*, was published in 1938.

Through the good offices of Arnold Haskell, she was given carte blanche by the managements concerned to take shots from all parts of the theatre, and secured some wonderful sequences of famous dancers in great performances during those fabulous pre-war Blum and de Basil seasons. Later, at the Wells, she captured the spirit of a young company on the threshold of its career.

How glad one was to see her after the war, ensconced with her camera in a shadowy corner of the Stalls Circle at Covent Garden. But although another remarkable collection of photographs was the result, it was also the last. She was, she tells us, no longer given the freedom of the house for the exercise of her art, and found this restriction irksome and limiting: so ballet knew her no longer. She now devoted herself completely to her assignments for *Picture Post* where, as a member of the staff she led a life as exciting and as varied as her own superb photographs, and which included a trip to the Belgian Congo and the Mountains of the Moon. Miss Severn's account of her career, told with direct simplicity and a feeling for words, is memorable for its revelation of an artist at work. The photographer, it would seem, as well as the poet, painter or writer, awaits the inspiration of an inner voice and is miserably lost without it. For four years, she tells us, that voice has been silent. But although one feels that she has now discovered a new medium where she may once again find it, one also hopes that she may yet return to ballet.

There is an interesting and sympathetic foreword by her former chief, Tom Hutchinson and the book is illustrated with many of her best photographs. These include that well-remembered and ravishing shot—taken from the flies at Covent Garden—of *Symphonie Fantastique*. Here the dancers in the play of light and shade have something of the velvety yet translucent quality of gardenias.

SHELAGH ELLIOTT-CLARKE

THE THEATRE SCHOOL
OF THE NORTH-WEST

Comprehensive training in all branches of
Dance and Drama

DAY SCHOOL with limited hostel accommodation for artistic children between the ages of ten and seventeen

**GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION
IN GENERAL SUBJECTS**

ART MUSIC DANCE DRAMA

63 Rodney Street, Liverpool 1 ROYal 3323

JANET CRANMORE

School of Classical Ballet

(Legat System)

Studios and Private Theatre

154 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 16

Telephone: Edgbaston 2482

SIGURD LEEDER SCHOOL OF DANCE

MODERN BALLET

FULL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
AMATEUR CLASSES FOR MEN AND WOMEN
OPEN CLASSES FOR PROFESSIONALS

46a REGENT SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1

Tel : TERminus 1915

PHYLLIS BEDELLS

VICE-PRESIDENT ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCING

SCHOOL OF BALLET -

Professional and Amateur

BALLET (R.A.D.) CHARACTER, NATIONAL

MODERN BALLROOM, STAGE

INCLUSIVE TRAINING FOR STUDENTS

28 QUEX ROAD, WEST HAMPSTEAD, N.W.6

Maida Vale 2324

LILIAN HARMEL STUDIO

Holds a Special Course of Modern Dance
for students of Ballet and Dramatic Art

Enquiries: 37 FERNCROFT AVENUE, LONDON, N.W.3

Telephone: HAM 0213

LEARNING TO DANCE

WITHOUT the aid of a written score, the preservation of a choreographic work is a matter of chance. Many of the most inspired productions of the original Russian Ballet cannot now be repeated because there is so much divergence of opinion regarding details that have faded from memory. When old works are revived, it is usually because there happens to be someone available who knows intimately every detail of the original, and that, of course, can only be someone with a photographic memory who had ample opportunity of studying the initial work at first hand. Where tradition survives, it has usually been handed down by a kind of human chain, from dancer to dancer. Lapse of memory may easily imperil the identity of a work once it has dropped out of the repertoire for any length of time. With notation, however, the creator's original ideas are not only fixed for all time, but they have the added merit of being available to later generations for study and repetition.

Because it is so universally applicable and accurate Labanotation has proved particularly useful in dealing with dance compositions. Whole ballets are recorded in it; for instance, *Symphony in C*, *Orpheus*, *Bourrée Fantasque*, all by George Balanchine and each employing completely different styles of movement. Having these works recorded has proved invaluable, not only from the documentary point of view but also as a short cut to teaching. With rehearsal time so limited, replacements in ballet companies often get material thrown at them in a great hurry. And often the teaching is inaccurate. How much better it is when the dancer can have a score in hand to check for details! Ann Hutchinson says: "I have been called in during rehearsals to deal with points raised by various dancers in an argument. Mr. Balanchine preferred not to be bothered with such questions—often he could not remember just how it had been. Here is where the notator acts in the same capacity as the continuity-stenographer in film production, reading back to the choreographer just what he has set as the choreographic pattern".

There are those catastrophes when a principal dancer is taken sick and someone insufficiently rehearsed has to step in and take over. Miss Hutchinson remembers a particular occasion when Tanquil Le Clerq went down with appendicitis. Yvonne Mounsey had to go on that night in her part as Queen of the Bacchantes in *Orpheus*. There was no rehearsal studio available, and no pianist on hand; but Ann was able to go through the sequence again and again with Miss Mounsey in the hallway, drilling her in the very difficult steps and counts. But for Labanotation this would not have been possible.

"The ideal, of course" says Miss Hutchinson, "is for dancers themselves to be able to read their parts, but this must come with the next generation, for today's professionals are already too taken up with rehearsals, performances and necessary relaxation to embark on a course of study which comes easily to pupils in the normal course of their training."

"Notators are really 'custodians of choreography'. With a notator on hand we would avoid the shameful practice which occurred in one well-known ballet company, when the ballet master took the liberty of changing the choreography to simplify rehearsals. A ballet had been set by Balanchine in canon form, each dancer doing the same movement but on a different count. Rather than rehearse this tricky passage, the ballet master instructed the corps de ballet to perform it simultaneously. Had the work been written down in black and white this could not have happened. It is no wonder that choreographers have been chary of allowing their works to be performed by other groups than their own. However, thanks to Labanotation and its proof of usefulness over 25 years, choreographers can now register their works for copyright and so we see scores being reconstructed for performance in different parts of the country."

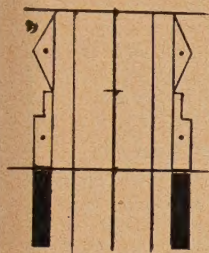
The greatest advantage of the Laban system over all others invented so far lies in its unique handling of rhythm.

In dance notation the problem of indicating duration has always caused headaches, for although modified forms of musical notes could give a fairly faithful reproduction of time values, they were not so successful in delineating the subtle details of movement patterns. Since the *length* of the basic symbol represents the time involved, from the beginning of the movement to its end, Labanotation provides an excellent solution to the problem of rhythm. The finest distinctions of timing can be recorded merely by modifying the standard rectangle already used to show the level and direction. This allows for complete rhythmical flexibility.

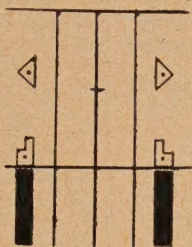
Each count (quarter note) is marked off on the centre line of the staff, thus the subdivisions in the use of time are easy to see. Long symbols indicate slow, sustained movement, short symbols show quick, staccato actions.

WITH ABANOTATION

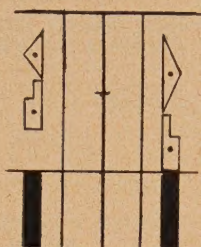
Here is a spatial arm-pattern, notated for performance in three different rhythms :



Legato

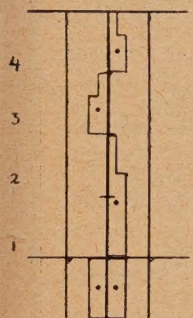


Staccato

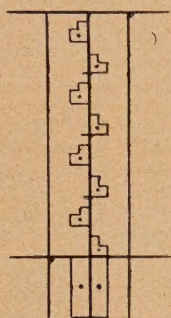


Subtle timing, as used in a Tudor ballet.

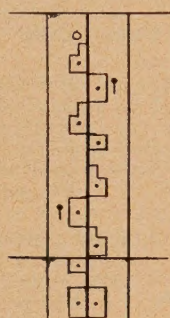
Basic rhythmic foot patterns are easy to read. Here are three typical examples :



Walking a half note (minim) and two quarter notes (crotchets).



Running eighth notes, (quavers). The slight spaces between the symbols shows leaving the ground between each step.



Polka step.

Moreover, Labanotation insures the greatest precision when it is desired, being capable of showing the most minute distinctions. No detail that is important is allowed to escape. Not even toes and eyebrows are exempt, and the crook of a little finger can be just as clearly shown as the inclination of the head or the line of an attitude. Nothing need be ambiguous, every shade of emphasis, every quality from stamping to feathery lightness, can be clearly shown. An eight-volume encyclopaedia on the system has been compiled by Albrecht Knust, who sought to record every possible type of movement and its variations. Such a work is a wonderful source of reference for those who need to delve into the finer points; the average dancer, on the other hand, can use the more general version of the system.

"So many people still have the idea that Labanotation is something apart from dance—awfully brainy and good for you, but no fun at all", says Ann Hutchinson. "Some teachers even think you need a separate classroom with desks to do notation properly. But all you really need is the ordinary dance classroom facilities, plus a large blackboard. Recently I taught the system during the ballet classes at the High School of Performing Arts. The students were rank beginners and had everything to learn. I inserted a few moments of notation into one of the first classes to illustrate a point of movement. The time taken to explain the basic staff and what the symbols meant was negligible. In subsequent classes I did the same thing, choosing movements that needed explaining and that were simple enough to explain in easy terms. I followed this up with large charts of the eight positions of the body, the six pas de bourrées and other movements they had not immediately grasped. One of the students suddenly said: 'Is This notation?', and when I answered yes, "Why", she gasped, 'it isn't hard!'.

This is the last in this series by Ann Hutchinson, President of The Dance Notation Bureau in New York. Interview by ELISABETH CORATHIEL.

Now Available DANCE OF THE LITTLE SWANS

The Pas de Neuf by

GEORGE BALANCHINE



This dance, an excerpt from the ballet *Swan Lake*, complete with word notes, music, stage diagrams and fine details of performance recorded in Labanotation, provides excellent study material in repertoire and in style for the advanced ballet student. Price 25/-.

Learn to read Labanotated classical ballet scores after 16 hours of study. Special courses in Labanotation geared to the needs of the ballet field now being offered.

Other Labanotation publications :

"My First Dance Book"

"Three Rs for Dancing"

"Ten Dances in Labanotation"

"Dance Techniques and Studies"

"Labanotation" (textbook)

All available at Watkins Bookshop, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, W.C.2.

Send for free information leaflets on classes, lectures, exhibits, postal courses, etc. to Labanotation, 152 Earls Court Road, S.W.5.

for the

Ballerina

of the family



We Stock :

All Regulation Dress and Exam
Garments, Tights, Leotards, etc.

also

Ballet and Tap Shoes, etc.

Price List 2½d.

Personal visitors welcomed

E. GANDOLFI LTD.

*Theatrical and Ballet
Shoe Makers*

Showroom
Dorset House • 150 Marylebone
Rd • London N.W.1
near Baker St. Station)
WELbeck 8083 and 6049

THE EUPHAN MACLAREN THEATRE SCHOOL

FULL STAGE TRAINING
CHILDREN CAREFULLY TRAINED
JUNIOR BALLET CLASS EVERY DAY

Apply for Prospectus

THE STUDIO, 10 SCARSDALE VILLAS,
KENSINGTON, W.8 Western 6605

HILDE HOLGER SCHOOL OF MODERN BALLET

Curriculum : Modern Technique—Classical Technique—Dance
Composition—Choreography

PRODUCTION GROUP APRIL 14th, Technical College, Enfield
Intensive Evening Course—Professionals—Amateurs—Children
Prospectus: Secretary, 27 Oval Road, Regents Park,
London, N.W.1. Phone: GULLiver 6822

Flamenco Dancing

Continued from page 17

The most popular dances, the *Zapateado*, the *Alegrías* and the *Vito* have also suffered many changes. Here we see all the wild abandon of the gypsy. The word *alegría* itself means gaiety. The *Zapateado*, well known to the English ballet lover has, I regret to say, become in many cases a mere exhibition of virtuosity and is the dance most martyred by non-Spaniards. The *Vito*, another highlight of Pilar Lopez's repertoire, was originally danced on a table by two gypsies, the prime achievement being not to spill a drop of the wine in the glasses arranged all over the table top. Given this information it is easy to see the point of the intricate footwork which makes this dance so fascinating to watch.

No survey of flamenco would be complete without a mention of the guitar. The guitar is "the voice of Spain" and its insistent, pulsating rhythm is indispensable in any interpretation of flamenco. There is always something lacking when it is accompanied by an orchestra no matter how accomplished, and flamenco thumped out on a piano, to which more than one company has treated us, is veritably insipid. De Falla would throw a fit! Only the guitar can express the wild gaiety, and at the same time the unspeakable sadness, of the Andalusian gypsy.

Where, then, is the connection between the gaiety and the sadness? In the strict sense of the word connection there is none. The fact is that indifference is an emotion quite foreign to the Spaniard. Either he feels a thing passionately or he doesn't feel it at all. When he is gay he is wildly so; when he is sad he is utterly desolated. The Spanish language has a word for it—*brío*. It is this *brío* which drove the immortal Don Quixote across Spain in search of adventure. Don Quixote is more than a mad knight. He is an expression of the true feelings of the true Spaniard. For anyone who wants to understand the Spanish character there is no better textbook than a good translation of Don Quixote.

In our fourth and last chapter in this series David Benn raises the question "Is flamenco dancing a direct descendant of the art of the oldest civilisation the world has ever known?"



SPANISH RESTAURANT SPANISH MUSIC & DANCE

ENJOY SPANISH FOOD

IN A
REAL SPANISH
ATMOSPHERE

DANCING NIGHTLY by
MARGARITA

GUITAR MUSIC and SONGS

FULLY LICENSED
REASONABLE PRICES

LUNCH — 12-3
DINNER — 6-11.30

MARGARITA

17 CORK ST., LONDON, W.1
REGENT 5680-4870

Made in France

Fabiola

fully fashioned

NYLON STRETCH TIGHTS

as worn by members of the Sadlers Wells Ballet

Black, White,
Flesh, Light &
Dark Tan

FROM LEADING
THEATRICAL COSTUMIERS

Sizes:
Average
Large

Insist on

Fabiola Fully Fashioned Tights

LEFF & JASON LTD

(Established 1921)

LONDON'S LARGEST STOCKISTS OF THEATRICAL MATERIALS

LEOTARDS AND TIGHTS STOCKED AND MADE TO MEASURE

FIRST QUALITY JERSEY WOOL.
UNLIMITED RANGE OF COLOURS

LEOTARD SHORT SLEEVE 42/6
LEOTARD LONG SLEEVE 45/0

TIGHTS

With Feet 37/6 per pair
Without Feet 35/- per pair

JERSEY WOOL SKIN SUITS

(All in one Leotard and Tights.)
From 80/-

Super Elastic Fishnet OPERA HOSE

NYLON REINFORCED
TAN, FLESH and Black
30/- per pair

Fishnet Tights 50/- per pair

"MOUSSENYL"

(Made in France)
NYLON CREPE
S-T-R-E-T-C-H TIGHTS
TAN, FLESH AND BLACK
63/- per pair

NYLON CREPE STRETCH OPERA HOSE

Tan, Flesh and Black.
22/6 per pair

ELASTIC SATIN PANTIE
Foundation or top garment.
Black only. 30/- per pair

GENT'S THEATRICAL SUPPORT

Black, and White.
22/6 each

WOMEN'S JOCK STRAP

Flesh only 14/11 each

"G" STRING. Flesh only
6/11 each.

SUSPENDER BELT FOR
OPERA HOSE
WITH SIX SUSPENDERS
10/11 each

JERSEY WOOL SKIRTS

On Elastic Waist Band
Any colour to match or
contrast. leotard 12" or 14"
skirt. 30/- each.

"CAPRICETTE" PERLON BIKINI TWO-WAY STRETCH

Recommended pantie and
girdle combined
Black, White and Flesh.
33/6 each

CRIN. WIRE

FLAT COVERED
 $\frac{3}{16}$ " 1/- p. yd., 3/8" 2/- p. yd.
5/8" 2/6 per yd.

TARLATAN

Full range of colours
38" wide, 1/10 per yard.

48" wide, WHITE ONLY 2/- p. yd.
36" wide, WHITE ONLY 1/3

TINSEL GAUZE

24" wide, 5/11 per yd.

METAL TISSUE

36" wide, 9/11 per yd.

SUPERFINE RAYON NET

54" wide, 2/9 & 3/6 per yd.,
in an extensive range of
colours, including matching
for our Tarlatans.

SPECIAL BALLET NET

ALL COLOURS

54" wide, 4/- per yard.

SELF SPOT NET

Self Spot Net, all colours,
54" wide, 3/11 per yard.

NYLON NET

Very latest colours, 54" wide,
6/6 per yard.

TAFFETAS

All colours, 36" wide, 2/6
and 3/6 per yard.

SHOT TAFFETA

Many colourings, 36" wide,
3/11 per yard.

SATINS

Large range of 30 colours,
36" wide, 3/11 per yd.
Large range of colours, 36"
2/11.

1" PIERROT STRIPE

Gold, green, blue, red and
black, 36" wide, 4/11 per yd.

MULTI-COLOUR STRIPED
SPUN. Many colours, 36"
wide, 4/11 per yd.

MIRROR SEQUINS ALL COLOURS

In packets of approx.
500 pieces of any one
colour. Sizes $\frac{1}{4}$ ", 1/6 per
packet; 5/8", 8/- per pack-
et. 1" Flats, 5/- per 100;
Cup SEQUINS, $\frac{1}{4}$ ", 2/3 per
packet of 500. Star Shape,
2/6 for 50. Leaf Shape, 3/6
for 100. Both patterns
approx. 1"

GLITTER DUST

Spangle your own Tarlatan,
etc. Glorious range of colours,
1-oz. envelopes, 2/6. With
instructions for use.

SEQUESTICK (trade mark).
For applying sequins, glitter
dust, rhinestones, etc., 6d.
per tube.

When ordering Glitter Dust
and/or Sequins only please
enclose 3d. for postage.

89 & 91 Middlesex Street, Bishopsgate, London, E.1
Trains and Buses to Liverpool Street. Telephones: B15hopsgate 4011 & 7496

Hours of Business: Monday—Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturday Closed All Day.

POST ORDERS RECEIVE PROMPT ATTENTION

Send stamped addressed envelope for our patterns and price list

Young Dancers

THE Third Juvenile Dancing Festival sponsored by Mr. W. E. Butlin, M.B.E. will be held at the Filey Holiday Camp from 25th August to 1st September 1956. There will be two competitions for ballet dancers, and they are both open to the World, British Junior and Senior Ballet Championships. The Prize in each category is a trophy value £50, to be presented by Mr. Butlin, and which is to be held for a period of 11 months. Closing date for entries is 30th June and enquiries should be addressed—The National Organiser, Butlin's Dance Festivals—as follows—from *October to May* inclusive—36, Trippet Lane, Sheffield 1, from *June to September* inclusive—Butlin's Holiday Camp Filey Yorks.

VERONICA Fisher, aged eight, daughter of a London Doctor, has received all her training in Spanish Dancing at the Elsa Brunelleschi Dancing Academy. She has been training only one year. Veronica also takes ballet classes at the School and hopes to take the R.A.D. Grades Exam. during this summer. She recently danced at a Cocktail Party for the London Group of the I.S.T.D.

CELIA Ann Nichols, pupil of the Yvonne Academy of Wanstead, commenced modelling for the best fashion houses in London at the age of 2½ years. Now at six she is the holder of ten certificates, a silver and bronze medal for ballet dancing, and has appeared two years in succession in the T.V. fashion parade for the year.

THE LIFE OF A DANCER

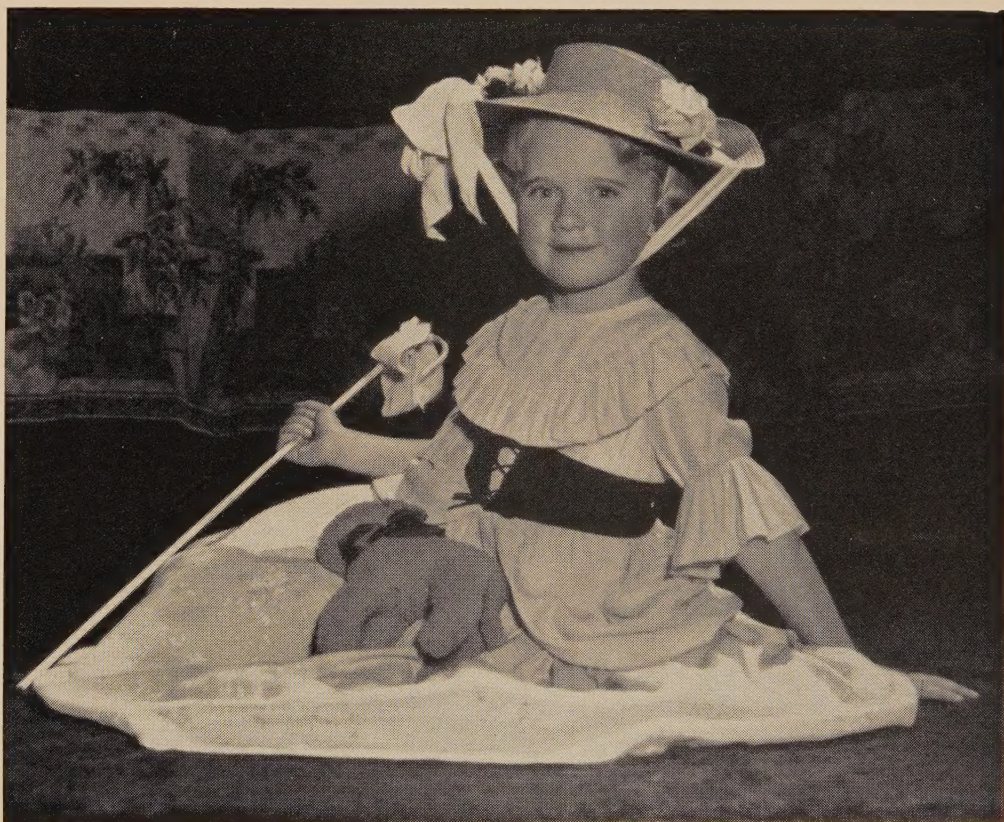
ROMA is a living example of the miracle of modern surgery. Three years ago she was badly burned in a fire in a theatre dressing room. After months of treatment her doctors told her she would not dance again. Today she not only walks, but also dances; her tremendous will to do so has made this possible. As with so many dancers, however, life is not easy. She writes to me regularly, and because I admire her courage and look forward to her cheerful letters I quote below extracts from her latest from Paris.

"At the moment I am doing baby-sitting in exchange for a room, rent free, have a small class of American children, and work with an Opera group touring the provinces at the week-ends. We are doing Opera-Ballet at the moment

and the singers are very good. The dancers are not so good, mostly because they have not got the "Swan Lake or nothing" complex here, and all have to work at anything and everything—cabaret, revue teaching, etc. indeed the French dancers have taught me what it means to work without the protection of Equity—no pay for rehearsals, starting and finishing at all hours. The outcome is, that we do *work*. On Saturday last, we all met at 7.30 a.m. to collect our wigs and join the Company's bus to go to St. Quentin. Then there was rehearsal. Out of what seemed utter confusion, no dress rehearsal, only one fitting for clothes, no look at the decor before going on, the performance went perfectly, with that casualness of the French, and no tantrums. The French dancers were very kind to me, although I was doing the little pas de deux. We all finished at midnight, and went out for a meal—the town still alive and cafes open. At 2 a.m. we came back to Paris and arrived at Pigalle at 5 a.m. The theatre was full on both occasions—what an odd lot the French are, imagine Opera Ballet going down in our T.V. mad provinces."



Above: Veronica Fisher
Below: Celia Ann Nichols



ALL THE STARS

*Margot Fonteyn
Alicia Markova
Nadia Nerina
Svetlana Beriosova
Violetta Elvin
Elaine Felfeld
Rowene Jackson
Natalie Krassovska
Beryl Grey*



KNOW

Ballet
SHOES

AND TIGHTS BY

ANELLO & DAVIDE

Ballerina's Shoemaker

96 CHARING CROSS ROAD,
LONDON, W.C.2 TEMple Bar 5019